DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 189 004 SO 012 699

AUTHOR Scaife, Rugenal Rich
TITLE A Look at the Literature of an African People: The Ashanti of Ghana. An Instructional Unit for Eleventh Grade English.
INSTITUTION Illinois Univ., Urbana. African Studies Program.
SPONS AGENCY National Endowment for the Humanities (NFAH), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE Jul 78
NOTE 23p.: For related documents, see SO 012 684-703. Not available in paper copy from EDRS due to poor reproducibility of some pages in the original document.

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *African Culture: *African Literature: *Area Studies: *Cultural Awareness: Educational Objectives: Folk Culture: Grade 11: Learning Activities: Resource Materials: Secondary Education: Teacher Developed Materials: Teaching Methods: Units of Study
IDENTIFIERS Ghana

ABSTRACT

This guide presents a three-week unit on the literature of Ghana. It is designed as part of an eleventh grade world literature course. General objectives include having students identify the literature of Africa with the outstanding literature of the world, change negative attitudes about Africa, and provide a broad view of the lifestyles of Africa. The unit is composed of 15 lessons. Students are introduced to an overview of Africa after which they examine the life of the Ashanti of Ghana, the oral tradition in African literature, and Ghanian oral narratives, short stories, poetry, and drama. Activities include notetaking, discussion, research, oral play reading, map work, written reports, and filmstrip viewing. Each lesson outlines objectives, procedures, materials needed, activities, and suggestions for evaluation. A bibliography of required readings is also included. (KC)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED189004

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Rugenal Rich Scaife

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

"A LOOK AT THE LITERATURE OF AN AFRICAN PEOPLE: THE ASHANTI OF GHANA"

An Instructional Unit for Eleventh Grade English

by

Rugenal Rich Scaife
Central High School
West Helena, Arkansas

SO 012 699

This teaching unit on Africa was developed as part of an interdisciplinary workshop project in African curriculum development held on the University of Illinois' Urbana-Champaign campus in the summer of 1978. The workshop project, which was funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, was carried out from 1977-80 and was integrated into an on-going program of outreach services offered to teachers nation-wide. For further information on teaching aids available through outreach services, contact:

Outreach Director
African Studies Program
1208 West California, #101
Urbana, Illinois 61801

"A LOOK AT THE LITERATURE OF AN AFRICAN PEOPLE:
THE ASHANTI OF GHANA"

1. Preface Statement

This unit, "A Look at the Literature of an African People: The Ashanti of Ghana," is being taught as an integral unit in world literature. A random sampling of Ghanaian authors will represent the people as writers of poetry, short stories, narratives, and drama. Some selections from other countries in Africa will be used for comparisons and variety.

2. Grade Level and Course

The course is designed for eleventh grade English. The expected time frame is to be no longer than three weeks (15 school days).

3. Objectives

3.1 Concepts
- a. cultural values
- b. diversity

3.2 Basic Skills
- a. Students will identify African literature
- b. Students will have a wider range of reading experience
- c. Students will develop an awareness of symbolism in written literature and in oral narratives
- d. Students will identify the clever use of figures of speech
- e. Students will draw parallels of Ghanaian and American writers
- f. Students will compare and contrast universal skills
- g. Students will improve communication skills
- h. Students will sharpen visual perception
- i. Students will learn to avoid stereotypes

4. Materials

a. Allen, Samuel. Poems from Africa. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1973. Ghanaian poets found in this book are:
   (1) Christina Ama Ata Aidoo
   (2) R. E. G. Armattoe
   (3) Kofi Awoonor
   (4) Kwesi Brew

b. Beier, Ulli. Black Orpheus. Longmans of Nigeria Ltd., Mbari, 1964. (An anthology of African and Afro-American prose) Short Stories to be used representing West Africa is "No Sweetness Here," by Christina Aidoo.

c. Berger, Terry. Black Fairy Tales. Atheneun, 1969. This book contains tales told by the Swazi, the Shangani and the 'Msuto people of South Africa, and collected in the nineteenth century and retold here. It was done especially for the Black children who have never read black fairy tales. From the selection, "The Beauty and the Beast" (a Swazi tale) will be recorded and played for the students.

d. Coffin, Tristram P., and Cohen, Hennig. Folklore in America. Doubleday & Company, Inc.,Garden City, New York, 1970. This book contains tales, songs, proberbs, riddles, games, folk drama, and folk festivals.

e. Courlander, Harold. Ashanti Folk Tales From Ghana. Folkway Records, 1966. This album is a recording of six Ashanti tales narrated by Harold Courlander. The tales include "All Stories are Anansi's" and others.

f. Feldmann, Susan. African Myths and Tales. Dell Publishing Co., Inc., New York, 1972. Various myths and tales from several countries.

g. Haley, Gail E., A Story A Story (an African tale). Connecticut Printers, Inc., Hartford, 1970. This book is used in connection with Courlander's album to introduce a series of high interest Ashanti narratives called "Spider Stories." This particular story shows how small, defenseless men (or animals) can use their skills to defeat others considered stronger than they.

h. Hughes, Langston. Poems from Black Africa. Indiana University Press, 1963. This book has a collection of poems from Africa which are reprinted in Compass (class textbook), Leo B. Kneer. Scott, Foresman, and Company, 1971.

i. Larson, Charles,R., African Short Stories. New York: McMillin Company, 1970. Twelve stories by black writers are contained in this book. "The Tax Dodger" by Cameron Duodu from Ghana is included and an excerpt will be taken from the story.

j. Mphahlele, Ezekiel. African Writing Today. Penguin Books, Baltimore Maryland, 1970.T The writings in this book coyer major universal concerns interpreted in African terms.

k. Pieterse, Cosmo (ed.), Five African Plays. Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1972. London. Included in this book is "Laughter and Hubbub in the House," by Kwesi Kay from Ghana.

l. Soyinka, Wole. Collected Plays. Oxford University Press. London, Oxford, New York, 1973. In this collection various plays which will be used as outside reading for interested students.

m. Soyinka, Wole. Poems of Black Africa. Heinemann, London, 1975. Works of the following poets are contained in this volume:
(1) Kofi Awoonor
(2) Kwesi Brew
(3) Joe de Graft
(4) Kojo Gyinaye Kyei
(5) Atukwei Okai
(6) Frank Kobina Parkes
(7) G. Adali-Mortty

n. Winther, Barbara. Plays from Folktales of Africa and Asia. Plays Inc., Boston, 1976. Included in this collection are groups of one-act, royalty free dramatizations for young people, from stories and legends of Africa and Asia. From this book will come the class production "Anansi, The African Spider," (three folktales from West Africa.

o. Anansi the Spider. African Studies Program. 11 minutes, color. This film is an adventurous tale of how Anansi, the folklore hero of Ghana, is responsible for placing the moon in the sky.

p. The Ashanti of Ghana: A Heritage of Gold. African Studies Program.

These last two items may be borrowed free of charge from: African Studies Program, University of Illinois, 1208 West California, #101, Urbana-Champaign, Illinois 61801.

5. Activities:

a. Map work
b. Oral reports
c. Written reports
d. Class reading
e. Oral discussions
f. Oral presentations of narratives
g. Research
h. Note taking
i. Play acting (audio-visual taping)

General Objectives to be taught throughout the duration of this unit.

1. To identify the literature of Africa with the outstanding literature of the world.

2. To change negative attitudes about Africa.

3. To give students a broad view of the lifestyles of Africa.

4. To get students interested in outside reading.

5. To improve communication skills.

6. To give students material they can use to erase negative stereotypes.

7. To give students a literary exposure to Ghanaian writers.

8. To show universal themes in prose and poetry.

Lesson One

"Africa: An Overview"

A. Objectives

Concepts to be taught in today's lesson.
1. diversity
2. cultural values

General objective - To expose students to the people and land of Africa.

Basic skills to be developed in today's lesson.

1. Students will identify examples of a diversified continent
2. Students will identify the values of an African culture
3. Students will learn to avoid stereotypes.

B. Implementation:

Show a general map of Africa. Have students write down twenty words they think of in relation to Africa. Collect these and begin to talk about them. Assuming that words such as "jungle," "wild animals," "savages," "tribes," etc. appear, I can start debunking many of the stereotypes that many people have about Africa.

Pivotal questions to further the discussion:
1. What do you think is the daily occupation of an African?

2. What kind of houses do Africans live in?

3. What language is spoken in Africa?

4. How many people live in Africa?

5. What kind of land riches does Africa have?

6. How many countries are there in Africa?

7. Can you name any African countries?

8. What races of people live in Africa?

Answers to these questions will be a spin-off for debunking more myths and stereotypes about Africa and Africans.

Materials:

Maps, overhead projector, transparency (map)

Lesson one continued

C. Activities for Students:

Students will plot countries of African geographic features, and climatic and vegetation zones.

D. Evaluation:

I shall observe the reactions of the students which will give me some indication of the gravity of their interest.

Lesson two

"Africa: Ghanaian Highlights"

A. Objectives

Concepts to be taught in today's lesson.

1. diversity
2. cultural values

Basic Skills to be developed in today's lesson.

1. Students will view people of Ghana with respect.
2. Students will learn to avoid stereotypes.

B. Implementation:

Show location of Ghana on the map and identify Ashanti with Ghana. Call for assignment made on previous day. Show the proximity of other countries to Ghana.

Present filmstrips - "The Ashanti of Ghana: A Heritage of Gold." The showing of these films will bring the students closer to the country which we will be studying.

Students will experience and explore these major aspects of the culture of the Ashanti

1. the people and their daily lives
2. the effect of the environment
3. the cultural and historical background
4. the economy
5. arts and crafts
6. ceremonies and celebrations

Materials

Filmstrip - "The Ashanti of Ghana: A Heritage of Gold"
cassette/cassette player
filmstrip projector
projection screen

C. Activities:

Discuss the culture and life of the Ashanti as depicted in the filmstrip. Emphasize similarities which are common to all people and also note differences.

D. Evaluation:

Assess the remarks and observations the students make as to their progress in viewing Ghanaians as people who share commonalities with all the world's peoples.

Lesson three -"The Oral Tradition"

A. Basic skills to be developed in today's lesson.

1. Students will appreciate an oral form of literature
2. Students will develop an awareness of symbolism in oral literature
3. Students will make parallels of American "folklore" and African "folklore"
4. Students will evaluate audio-visual material.

B. Implementation:

Make the transition from the filmstrip shown in lesson two to lesson three by recalling the picture of the story teller. Acknowledge the fact that in many parts of Africa, as a matter of tradition, the art of storytelling still exists. Emphasize that dance and music are a part of the performance. In the case of Mr. Dapaah of Ghana as shown in the filmstrip, his family members and workers surrounded him outside his house. The storytelling can take place in the marketplace, around a night fire, or staged for public audiences. In these types of performances, the audience participates as much as the actors. The stories that have survived have special meanings and significance for the people of Ghana.

Pivotal question: Can anyone think of a tale that you may have been told by your parents or grandparents? (Let two or three be told.) Assign every student to find one tale for another day.

Give handout of A Story A Story.

After students have read, start the discuss with the following pivotal questions:
1. Who is Nyame?
2. Who was "Spider Man" and why does he got to see Nyame?
3. How is "Spider Man" victorious?
4. Show how "Spider Man" in the African narrative and "Spider Man" in the American adventure television series relate.

Materials:

Handout on A Story A Story.

C. Activities;

1. reading
2. oral discussion

D. Evaluation:

Students should be able to answer above questions.

Lesson four - "Oral narratives"

A. Basic skills to be developed in today's lesson.

1. Students will appreciate an oral form of literature.
2. Students will develop an awareness of symbolism in oral literature
3. Students will make parallels of American "folklore" and African "folklore"
4. Students will understand the traditional African narrative.

B. Implementation:

Once again explain that oral narratives are carried on generation after generation as a matter of tradition. Some of the narratives show a weak and defenseless animal overpowering a stronger and supposedly wiser animal (the same can be true of men). Some explain why things came to be. Others are just for entertainment.

Play Ashanti Folk Tales From Ghana for students. A few questions to get the students interested are:

1. How did Anansi get all stories?
2. Why are there so many hoes in the land of Ashanti?
3. Why does the frog not have a tail?
4. Why is the spider very thin in the middle?
5. Why do spiders hide in very dark corners?
6. How did Anansi prove that he was the oldest of all animals?

Pause after each tale and entertain comments.

Materials:

1. Record album -"Ashanti Folk Tales From Ghana"
2. Record player

C. Activities:

Call for the telling of tales which were assigned earlier. Students may recite or turn in assignments.

D. Evaluation:

All students will be responsible for one tale.

Lesson five

"Oral Narratives"

A. Basic Skills to be developed in today's lesson.

1. Students will appreciate an oral form of literature
2. Students will develop an awareness of symbolism in oral literature
3. Students will understand the traditional African narrative
4. Students will sharpen communication skills
5. Students will make parallels of American "folklore" and African "folklore."

B. Implementation:

Continue to comment on the traditional aspects of some of the familiar tales reported in last class session. Show film "Anansi the Spider." Entertain comments and discussion from class.

Play cassette recording of a black fairy tale - "The Beauty and the Beast" which is a Swazi tale taped by Ms. Rhonda Gray and Ms. Rugenal Scaife, two workshop participants. Indicate Swaziland in southern Africa map.

Materials:
Film - "Anansi the Spider"
Projector
screen
cassette recording
cassette player

C. Activities:

Students will participate in the class discussion.

D. Evaluation:

There will be a quick-check test given.

11

Lesson six

"Short Story"

A. Basic Skills: to be developed in today's lesson.

1. Students will appreciate African literature
2. Students will have a broader view of literature
3. Students will have a wider range of reading
4. Students will develop an awareness of symbolism in written literature
5. Students will discover the clever use of figures of speech
6. Students will apply the elements of the short story
7. Students will deal with universal themes and apply them to the short story
8. Students will improve communication skills,

B. Implementation:

The short story is being introduced as a new literary form from Ghana. The story "No Sweetness Here" by Christina Aidoo will be studied for two to three days. In the study of the story a vocabulary list of new and unfamiliar terms will be introduced. The following is a list from the short story:

1. Ahobaada
2. cassava
3. chagrin
4. customs
5. dowry
6. elder
7. Fanti
8. oil palm
9. palm wine
10. paw paw
11. plaintain
12. polygamy
13. presumptuous
14. witch
15. yam tubers

Students will be required to find definitions of the list above by using dictionaries or by contextual clues in the text of the story.

Materials:

Class sets of Webster's dictionary will be available.

Lesson six continued to lesson seven

B. Implementation:

The students will read the short story in class. From the reading, students whould be able to critically evaluate the short story. The student will also be able to discuss the short story in light of Africa and universal themes. Students will be directed to find the following:

1. examples of symbolism, synecdoche, irony, simile, apostrophe, etc.
2. examples of religious emphasis
3. western influences
4. examples of traditional customs
5. examples of parables
6. examples of similiarities of the African and American cultures

Materials:

1. worksheet
2. handouts of short story

C. Activities:

Students will take part in the oral discussion.

D. Evaluation:

Students will be given a short quiz.

Lesson eight - "Short Story"

A. Objective:

Students will be critiqued on reading comprehension.

B. Implementation:

Sample discussion questions to be asked follow:

1. Why was Chicha so concerned about Kwesi?
2. What was Chicha's occupation?
3. What conflict is going on in the story?
4. How is this conflict solved?
5. What are some indications of western influences?
6. What are some indications of religious beliefs?
7. Show some comparisons of our two cultures.
8. Cite some traditional customs.

Materials:

Students will use handouts of the short story.
Class sets of encyclopedias will be used.

C. Activities:

Students will find pictures of the foods found in the story.
Students will write a short synopsis of the story.

D. Evaluation:

Assess the students' synopses.

Lesson nine and ten

"Poetry of Ghana"

A. Basic Skills to be developed in today's lesson.

1. Students will appreciate poetry of Ghanaian poets.
2. Students will understand themes as indicated in the poems
3. Students will note parallels of American poetry on Ghanaian poetry.
4. Students will identify poetical devices
5. Students will build their vocabularies.

B. Implementation:

A selection of poems written by Ghanaian poets will be introduced and studied. Each poem will be studied for;

1. traditional implications (proverbs, customs)
2. literal meanings
3. figurative meanings
4. figurative language

The poets' background will also be highlighted. The following poets have been selected:

1. G. Adali-Mortty -- "Belonging"
2. Atukwei Okai -- "999 Smiles", and "Jonice"
3. Kofi Awoonor -- "Songs of Sorrow", and ""The Journey Beyond"
4. Kwesi Brew -- "Ancestral Faces", and "The Mesh"
5. Kojo Gyinaye Kyei -- "Time"
6. Joe de Graft -- "Akosua 'Nowa"
7. Frank Kobina Parkes -- "Redemption"

Materials:

1. Handouts of poems
2. New word list (found in the poems)
3. blackboard/chalk
4. Compass (poems from authors other than Ghanaians).

C. Activities:

Students will discuss and take notes.

D. Evaluation:

General evaluation will be covered in final test.

Lesson eleven

"Drama of Ghana"

A. Basic Skills to be developed in today's lesson.

1. Students will identify the central characters in the folklore of Ghana
2. Students will improve oral communication skills
3. Students will develop an awareness of African culture
4. Students will be able to demonstrate themes and characterizations
5. Students will participate in role-playing.

B. Implementation:

In the plays, "Anansi, the African Spider," students will be assigned the parts. There are twenty-seven different parts and so every student will have a chance to participate.

The point to make very clear is Spider is small, but sly, clever, and often full of mischief as is characteristic of other animals in other stories.

The play that I have chosen has the basic plot, theme, and meaning of traditional stories. It may have been altered a bit for the sake of simplicity, to enhance the flavor of the culture, or to fit the proper stage limitations for performance. (With the cooperation of the art department, storytellers will wear Adinkra cloths.)

Materials to be used:

1. handouts
2. minimal props

C. Activities for Students:

Students will read the play orally.

D. Evaluation:

All students will be expected to participate.

Lesson twelve

"Drama of Ghana"

A. Basic skills to be developed in today's lesson.

1. Students will identify the central characters in the folklore of Ghana
2. Students will improve oral communications skills
3. Students will develop an awareness of African culture
4. Students will be able to demonstrate themes and characterizations
5. Students will participate in role-playing.

B. Implementation:

Students will perform a reader's theater type performance of the play. A discussion of the play will follow. The discussion will cover such aspects as how Anansi was able to successfully bring the stories down? When and how was the first talking drum created? Why was the Tall-Tale man disgusted?

Relate the story to American tricksters.

Materials to be used:

1. handouts
2. minimal props (stool, rattles)
3. audio-visual taping component

C. Activities for Students:

Students will make a pre-television taping of the play. Art students will paint the berry bush and kola nut tree on the board in the background. A removable paper mache hornet's nest and a gourd will be constructed.

D. Evaluation:

Students will be expected to make a concerted effort to produce the performance.

Lesson thirteen

"Drama of Ghana"

A. Basic skills to be developed in today's lesson.

1. Students will participate in role-playing.
2. Students will develop an awareness of African culture.

B. Implementation:

Students will perform a reader's theater type performance of the play. African music will be played in the background. The play will be taped. Story tellers will wear replicas of the traditional "Adinkra Cloth."

C. Materials to be used:

1. Handouts
2. Minimal props (stool, rattles)
3. Sound effects (taped)
4. Pre-recorded African music and cassette player.
5. Audio-visual taping component.

C. Activities for Students:

All students will participate in the making and taping of the play. The play will be taped, and music and sound effects will be handled by the students.

D. Evaluation:

Each student will be expected to do his share in the production of the final performance.

Lesson fourteen

"Review"

A. Basic skills:

1. Students will be able to correlate many aspects of Ghanaian culture
2. Students will understand the similarities of this African culture and the American one
3. Students will demonstrate an acquired understanding of their cultural heritage.

B. Implementation:

A question and review type discussion will cover the previous weeks' lessons. Students will be allowed to ask any additional questions to complete their notes.

Materials:

As necessity dictates, handouts of the previous sessions may be needed and some of the cassette recordings and cassette player may be used.

C. Activities for students:

Students will ask and answer questions during the review.

D. Evaluation:

Students' answers, questions, and general oral participation will indicate the intensity of the teaching/learning experience which will have occurred in the preceeding lessons.

Lesson fifteen

"Overall test"

The Helena - West Helena School District feels that frequent testing in essential in the total educational development of the students. In compliance with this philosophy, I shall administer one overall evaluation type examination which will measure the achievement of the students and which will reflect the intensity of the teaching experience of this unit as a whole.

20